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SPENSER'S TWELVE MORAL VIRTUES "ACCORDING TO ARISTOTLE." II

After attempting to show that the virtues of Spenser's six¹ Books are not the ones discussed by Aristotle, Jusserand contends that Spenser's and Aristotle's virtues are unlike in that Aristotle treats all his virtues as means between extremes, even straining absurdly to do so, whereas Spenser treats only one of his, Temperance, as a mean, and it "only incidentally."² He admits that, "Either through direct or indirect borrowings, [Spenser] took from [Aristotle] his notion of the middle or virtuous state, standing between two faulty extremes." But he adds, "He did not try, as Aristotle did, to apply this theory to every virtue. It is only incidentally dwelt upon, forming the episode of Guyon's visit to Medina, Book II, c. 2."³ This point is important; for Jusserand's criticism means that Spenser ignored, almost completely, Aristotle's fundamental conception of what a virtue is—ignored what is the most important and characteristic thing about Aristotle's moral philosophy. Let us see if he did.

Expressed in terms of method, Aristotle's moral philosophy is essentially this: (1) He develops a virtue by showing its opposites, and by discussing various phases of the virtue and of its opposites.⁴ He treats a virtue as a mean between two extremes;⁵ but he discusses various phases of the mean and of its extremes, and he tends to make any given virtue include all the others;⁶ so that his virtues become a kind of center surrounded by many opposites.⁷ (2) He gives great emphasis to what he calls "the opposite" of a virtue, and

¹ M. Jusserand holds that the fragment called Book VII is not a part of the *F. Q.* Therefore, he does not discuss it. I hope to discuss this fragment in a subsequent paper. "Book VII" is certainly Aristotelian.

² *Mod. Phil.*, III, 374, 381, and note.

³ *Ibid.*, 381 and note.

⁴ See *N. Eth.*, III, ix ff.; IV; and V. See also II, vii.

⁵ See his definition of virtue "regarded in its essence or theoretical conception," *N. Eth.*, II, vi. See also II, viii.

⁶ See his explanation of his definition of virtue, *N. Eth.*, VI, especially chaps. i and xiii.

⁷ See *N. Eth.*, II, v; and II, ix.

says less, and in some cases almost nothing, about the other extreme, for his mean is not arithmetical; one who aims at the mean, he says, must, like Ulysses, keep farthest from Charybdis, the more dangerous of the two extremes.¹ And (3) he makes Reason the determiner of the right course in the case of each of the moral virtues.²

Such is the essence of Aristotle's moral philosophy. If, as Jusserand contends, Spenser ignores one of these principles, he is certainly not following Aristotle. If, as I shall undertake to prove, he applies all of these principles in his treatment of the virtues, he certainly does follow Aristotle, at least in essentials.

Spenser certainly develops the virtue of Holiness by showing its opposites, and by presenting various phases of the virtue and of its opposites. He represents Holiness by the Knight of Holiness (High-mindedness, moral perfection), Una (Christian Truth), Faith, Hope, and Charity, Heavenly Contemplation, and so on; and around these he groups Paganism, or Infidelity, "Blind Devotion"³ (Corceca), Monastic Superstition (Abessa), "Hypocriſe"⁴ (Archimago), Falsehood (Duessa, "faire Falsehood"⁵), False Pride or Conceit (Orgoglio and Lucifera), the Seven Deadly Sins and all the other vices, Error (the Dragon of Error in the first canto), and Satan (in Lucifera's train, and the Dragon of Evil in canto xi).

Moreover, he represents the virtue as a mean between extremes and emphasizes one extreme. Paganism, represented by the Paynim brethren Sansfoy (Unbelief), Sansjoy (Joylessness), and Sansloy (Lawlessness), is certainly one extreme in regard to Holiness. The opposite extreme is represented by Corceca ("Blind Devotion"), Abessa (Monastic Superstition), and the Satyrs who worship even Una's ass. Corceca is an ignorant, blind old woman who says thirty-six hundred prayers every day. She dares not stop mumbling her prayers. Abessa is her daughter. Again, the Knight of Holiness is a mean between sinful 'joyaunce' and joyless faith and abstinence, though it costs him hard fighting to keep to this mean. After he has slain the Paynim Sansfoy (canto ii), he successfully resists (canto iv) the temptation to join with Duessa in the "joyaunce" of the gay party composed of the Seven Deadly Sins. But immediately after he has resisted the joyance of sin, he is attacked

¹ See *N. Eth.*, II, ix.

² *Ibid.*, II, vi.

³ I, iii, Arg.

⁴ I, i, Arg.

⁵ I, ii, Arg.

by the Paynim Sansjoy, who proposes to cancel his victory over Sansfoy by taking away the shield which is the emblem of his victory.¹ He is least fortified on the side of Joylessness; we are told upon our first introduction to him that "of his cheere [he] did seeme too solemne sad."² Accordingly, the battle which ensues with Sansjoy is one of the hardest of his career.³ Once more, the Knight of Holiness is, as we have already seen, Aristotle's mean of Highmindedness. He thinks himself worthy of great things and is worthy of them; he neither overestimates nor underestimates his own worth—he is neither conceited nor meanminded. Arthur also represents this mean of Highmindedness. He thinks himself worthy of great honor, and is worthy of it. He aspires to the hand of great Gloriana (Glory), but we know, not only from his moral perfection, but also from the direct testimony of Una and the Knight of Holiness, that he is worthy of her.⁴ According to Aristotle, the worst case of Meanmindedness, one of the two extremes in regard to Highmindedness, is the man of great worth who underestimates his own deserts—cares too little for honor. Sir Satyrane, in a measure, illustrates this extreme. We feel that he is capable of as great things as Guyon or Calidore. Yet he disappoints us; he does nothing supremely great. Although he is possessed of great worth and wins fame—"through all Faery lond his famous worth was blown"⁵—he cares nothing for great honor. He is not among those who seek quests from great Gloriana,

That glorie does to them for guerdon graunt.⁶

To represent Conceit, the other main extreme in regard to Highmindedness, two characters are drawn, one masculine and one feminine. *Orgoglio* (Ital. *orgoglio*, pride; cf. GK. *ὀργάω*), though born of dirt and wind, and fostered by Ignaro (Ignorance), thinks himself very great. But when he is slain by the Knight of Holiness, his huge trunk collapses like a punctured bladder, showing that he is puffed up with conceit. Lucifera (the sinful mistress of the "house

¹ For the joyfulness of Faith, see Spenser's description of Faith (Fidelia) in canto x, especially stanzas 12-14.

² I, i, 2.

³ For the importance which Spenser attaches to this battle against joylessness, see the author's comments in canto v, stanza 1.

⁴ I, ix, 16, 17.

⁵ I, vi, 29.

⁶ I, x, 59.

of Pryde¹) is excessively proud and supercilious, though she is only the daughter of "Griesly Pluto" and the "Queene of Hell" and is thoroughly unworthy of honor. She includes all the Seven Deadly Sins, as Highmindedness includes all the virtues. Duessa also serves to represent Conceit,² though her main business is to represent Falsehood; she is very proud of her beauty and finery, but when stripped of false show, she proves to be only a filthy old hag. Clearly Spenser's emphasis is on the extreme of Conceit or False Pride.

Finally, Spenser certainly makes Reason the determiner of the mean for the virtue of Holiness. In canto ii the arch-deceiver Archimago makes the Knight of Holiness believe that his lady, Una, has stained her honor. Enraged, the Knight deserts Una, for whom he has undertaken to slay the Dragon of Evil, and rides off alone. He has ceased to be governed by Reason. We are told:

The eye of [his] reason was with rage yblent.³

Later we see again that he is guided not by Reason, but by 'will':

Will was his guide, and griepe led him astray.⁴

This is the beginning of all his troubles. He now misses the mean of Highmindedness. After a narrow escape from the House of Pride with its vices and pitiable victims, he is captured by Orgoglio (False Pride, Conceit) and languishes in his prison until rescued by Arthur (Highmindedness). Again, in canto vii, Arthur meets the deserted Una. In persuading her to unfold her grief, he advises her that "flesh may empaire . . . but reason can repaire."⁵ And "his goodly reason"⁶ wins. Thus we see that both Una and the Knight of Holiness must be governed by Reason. But so must Arthur. In canto ix, in which Arthur tells of the vision which caused him to fall in love with Gloriana, and of his pursuit of Glory, Arthur says:

But me had warnd old Timons wise behest,
Those creeping flames by reason to subdew, etc.⁷

Here again Reason is the determiner of the mean in regard to Highmindedness, or love of honor. Finally, even the Paynim Sansfoy apologizes for forgetting "the raines to hold of reasons rule."⁸

¹ I, iv, Arg.

² Note in I, iv, 37, that Duessa rides next to Lucifera.

³ Stanza 5.

⁴ Stanza 12.

⁵ Stanza 41.

⁶ Stanza 42.

⁷ Stanza 9.

⁸ I, iv, 41

We come now to Temperance. Everyone knows that Spenser develops this virtue and the virtues of all his other Books by showing their opposites and by presenting various phases of the virtue and of its opposites, and that he tends to make any given virtue all-inclusive. From the book of any one of Spenser's virtues a good case could be made out for all the moral virtues. But Spenser not only presents various phases of Temperance; he treats the same phases of Temperance that Aristotle treats. For example, outside of Temperance and Incontinence in the strict sense, the kinds of intemperance most emphasized by Aristotle are incontinence in regard to angry passion, incontinence in regard to honor, and incontinence in regard to wealth or gain. Aristotle specially and repeatedly mentions these as things in regard to which men may be incontinent in the broad sense. For instance, he says: "Men are called incontinent in respect of angry passion, honor, and gain."¹ Now these are the very kinds of intemperance which, outside of intemperance in the strict sense, Spenser presents most strongly. Angry passion Spenser exemplifies in Furor; in Phedon, who, "chawing vengeance,"² murders his sweetheart and his bosom friend, and is trying to murder his sweetheart's maid when he falls into the hands of Furor; and in Pyrochles, who "Furors chayne unbinds."³ Incontinence in respect of honor Spenser exemplifies in "Vaine Braggadocchio."⁴ He is one of Aristotle's "Conceited people," who, says Aristotle, "are foolish and ignorant of themselves and make themselves conspicuous by being so. . . . They get themselves up in fine dresses, and pose for effect, and so on, and wish their good fortune to be known to all the world, and talk about themselves as if that were the road to honor."⁵ Braggadocchio represents Conceit, or desire of honor by one who is unworthy of it, one of the opposites of Highmindedness, or right love of honor on a great scale. Again, one of the greatest of the temptations in Spenser's Cave of Mammon is Ambition, one of Aristotle's extremes in regard to ordinary honors. Incontinence in regard to wealth or gain is, of course, powerfully presented in Mammon, who tempts the Knight of Temperance in canto vii.

But, in addition to treating it as a kind of center surrounded by opposites, Spenser treats Temperance as a mean between extremes,

¹ *N. Eth.*, VII, ii. ² II, iv, 29. ³ II, v, Arg. ⁴ II, iii, Arg. ⁵ *N. Eth.*, IV, ix.

emphasizes one extreme in particular, and makes Reason the determiner of the mean. In the first canto of his Book on Temperance, he works out Aristotle's mean concerning Temperance. Although Aristotle holds that all the virtues are concerned with pleasure and pain, he gives peculiar emphasis to the relation of Temperance to pleasure and pain in his definition of the virtue. He says: "In respect of pleasures and pains, although not indeed of all pleasures and pains, and to a less extent in respect of pains than of pleasures, the mean state is Temperance."¹ Again, in connection with Incontinence, Aristotle gives an important place to the vice of Effeminacy. He says:

Of the characters which have been described the one [incontinence] is rather a kind of effeminacy; the other is licentiousness. The opposite of the incontinent character is the continent, and of the effeminate the steadfast; for steadfastness consists in holding out against pain, and continence in overcoming pleasure, and it is one thing to hold out, and another to overcome, as it is one thing to escape being beaten and another to win a victory. . . . If a person gives way where people generally resist and are capable of resisting, he deserves to be called effeminate. . . . It is only unpardonable where a person is mastered by things against which most people succeed in holding out, and is impotent to struggle against them, unless his impotence be due to hereditary constitution or to disease, as effeminacy is hereditary in the kings of Scythia, or as woman is naturally weaker than a man.

And he continues: "It is people of a quick and atrabilious temper whose incontinence is particularly apt to take the form of impetuosity; for the rapidity or the violence of their feeling prevents them from waiting for the guidance of reason."² Finally, Aristotle condemns suicide as Effeminacy: "For it is effeminacy to fly from troubles, nor does the suicide face death because it is noble, but because it is a refuge from evil."³ In canto one of Spenser's Book on Temperance we have the story of Mordant and Amavia. Acrasia (Intemperance), a beautiful but wicked enchantress, entices Sir Mordant away from his wife and finally poisons him; and the wife, in a fit of grief, commits suicide. Sir Guyon (the Knight of Temperance) and his Palmer (Reason or Prudence), having learned the story from the expiring wife, stand looking at the two dead bodies. Sir Guyon, turning to his Palmer, says:

Old Syre
Behold the image of mortalitie,

¹ *N. Eth.*, II, vii.

² *Ibid.*, VII, viii.

³ *Ibid.*, III, xi.

And feeble nature cloth'd with fleshly tyre,
 When raging passion with fierce tyrannie,
 Robs *reason* of her due regalitie,
 And makes it servant to her basest part:
 The *strong* it weakens with infirmitie,
 And with bold furie armes the *weakest* hart;
 The strong through *pleasure* soonest falles, the
 weake through *smart*.

Then Sir Guyon's Palmer (Reason) replies:

But *temperance* (said he) with golden squire
Betwixt them both can measure out a *meane*,
 Neither to melt in *pleasures* whot desire,
 Nor fry in hartlesse *griefe* and dolefull *teene*.
 Thrise happie man, who *fares them both atweene*.¹

Thus the incontinent Sir Mordant and the effeminate Amavia meet disaster because they fail to take the mean which Reason dictates in regard to "pleasure" and "smart." It will be noted that Spenser follows Aristotle even in such details as showing that greater strength is required to overcome pleasure than to resist pain. The importance which Spenser attaches to the suicide described in the episode is indicated by the name Amavia (Love of Life). Love of Life effeminately gives way to pain. The lesson of this canto cannot possibly be called "only incidental"; for Sir Guyon's relation to Mordant and Amavia is one of the larger elements of the plot, and one of the few discussed in Spenser's letter to Raleigh. It is the fate of Mordant and Amavia at the hands of Acrasia (Intemperance) which causes Guyon, the Knight of Temperance, to enter upon his quest to bind Acrasia.

So much for canto i. In canto ii Spenser works out the mean in regard to Aristotelian Temperance in the strict, or particular, sense.² Here, to quote Spenser's argument to the canto, Sir Guyon is shown

 the face of golden Meane.
 Her sisters two Extremities
 strive her to banish cleane.

Reason is made the determiner of the mean.³

What we have said of Spenser's treatment of Temperance as a mean between extremes is hardly more than a beginning of what

¹ II, i, 57-58.

² With the episode of Guyon's visit to Medina cf. *N. Eth.*, II, vii; III, xiii; and VII, xi.

³ See especially II, ii, 38. See also stanzas 15 and 17.

could be said if space permitted. See, for example, canto xii, which is a series of studies of the mean. The truth is that the whole Book is a study of the mean. Like Aristotle, Spenser puts the emphasis on the extreme of excess, not on that of deficiency. Again, we have mentioned only a few of the numerous instances in which Spenser makes Reason the determiner of the mean. See, for example, the author's comments in stanzas 1-2 of canto xi, in which Spenser lays down the general principle that Reason is the determiner of the mean in regard to Temperance. Another point is worth noting. Although Aristotle makes Reason the determiner of the mean in the case of each of the moral virtues, he gives peculiar emphasis to the rule of Reason in regard to Temperance. Accordingly, Spenser gives the greatest possible emphasis to the rule of reason in respect of Temperance. For example, Aristotle says in his discussion of Temperance: "As a child ought to live according to the direction of his tutor (*παιδαγωγός*) so ought the concupiscent element in man to live according to the reason."¹ And Spenser gives his Knight of Temperance a tutor, the black Palmer, who continually accompanies, instructs, and directs him, and whom his "pupill"² (Guyon) faithfully obeys. It is hardly necessary to add that Guyon's Palmer is Reason. If other proof than the allegory be needed that he is so, it may be found, for example, in II, i, 34; or in II, iv, 2; or in II, xii, 38.

Passing to Chastity, Book III, we find that Spenser again follows Aristotle's method of treating a virtue and his conception of what a virtue is. Even Chastity is presented as a mean between extremes. Moreover, the extremes themselves are Aristotelian.

There is a very close relation between Shame, or Chastity, and Temperance. Both Aristotle and Spenser make Temperance include sex morality. The extremes of Aristotelian Shame, or Modesty, in the strict sense, are Shamelessness and Licentiousness, on the one hand, and Bashfulness, lack of courteous bearing, on the other.³ The extremes of Aristotelian Temperance, in the strict sense, are Licentiousness and Incontinence, on the one hand, and Insensibility, or Asceticism, on the other.⁴ Now it will be remembered that

¹ *N. Eth.*, III, xv.

² II, viii, 7.

³ *N. Eth.*, II, vii, and IV, xv; *Rhetoric*, II, vi, and II, xii-xiii.

⁴ *N. Eth.*, II, vii; III, xiii-xv; VII, especially chap. xi.

Spenser in his discussion of Chastity draws not only upon Aristotle's discussion of Shame, or Modesty, but also upon that part of his discussion of Temperance which has to do with sex morality. Accordingly he makes the extremes of his virtue of Chastity the Aristotelian extremes of Shamelessness, Licentiousness, and Incontinence, on the one hand, and Discourtesy and Insensibility, or Asceticism, or Celibacy, on the other.

In the proem to the Book on Chastity, Spenser tells us that just as Gloriana represents the rule of Elizabeth, so Belpheobe represents "her rare chastity," and he makes the same point in his letter to Raleigh. In telling how Belpheobe cared for her "flower" of "chastity and virtue virginal," he indicates the extremes:

That dainty Rose, the daughter of the Morne,
More deare then life she tendered, whose flowre
The girland of her honour did adorne:
Ne suffred she the *Middayes scorching powre*,
Ne the *sharp Northerne wind* thereon to showre,
But lapped up her silken leaves most chaire,
When so the froward skye began to lowre:
But soone as calmed was the Christall aire,
She did it faire dispred, and let to florish faire.¹

For the Courtesy of Belpheobe see, in III, v, 27-55,² the story of her nursing the wounded Timias and of her treatment of him, a social inferior, when he falls in love with her. Belpheobe is praised because she can be chaste without running into the extreme of Discourtesy:

In so great prayse of stedfast *chastity*,
Nathlesse she was so *curteous and kind*,
Tempred with *grace* and goodly *modesty*,
That seemed those *two vertues* strove to find
The higher place in her Heroick mind.

To realize the seriousness of this extreme of Discourtesy it is only necessary to note the contemptible character of the discourteous Mirabella in Spenser's Book on Courtesy. Discourtesy here clearly includes the idea of celibacy. It should be remembered that Spenser's Courtesy is Aristotle's Friendliness—readiness to act as a true friend

¹ III, v, 51. See also stanzas 50-55, especially 52.

² Note especially III, v, 54-55. See also III, vi, 1-3.

would act—and that, with both Aristotle and Spenser, Friendship includes love. In his argument to canto vii of Book VI Spenser tells us that we are to learn of “Fayre Mirabellæes punishment for loves disdaine decreed.” Mirabella is cruel to her lovers and even boasts of the fact that they suffer and die because of their love for her. “She did all love despize.” She is determined to live a life of celibacy.

She was borne free, not bound to any wight,
And so would ever live, and love her owne delight.¹

Such is the Discourtesy, or Unfriendliness, which is one of the extremes in regard to Chasity. Mirabella is finally brought to justice by Cupid.

Another passage in which Spenser represents Discourtesy and Celibacy as an extreme in regard to Chastity is in canto vi of the Book on Chastity. Venus has lost her little son, Cupid. In searching a wood for him, she comes upon her sister, Diana, of whom she makes inquiries. Diana is ungracious, intolerant:

Thereat Diana gan to smile, in scorne
Of her vaine plaint, and to her scoffing sayd;
“Great pittie sure, that ye be so forlorne
Of your gay sonne, that gives you so good ayd
To your disports: ill mote ye bene apayd.”
But she was more engrieved, and replide;
“Faire sister, ill beseemes it to upbrayd
A dolefull heart with so disdainfull pride;
The like that mine, may be your paine another tide.

.
And ill becomes you with your loftie creasts,
To scorne the joy, that Jove is glad to seek;
We both are bound to follow heavens beheasts,
And tend our charges with obeisance meeke.
Spare, gentle sister, with reproch my paine to eeke.”²

After Diana has made further insulting speeches, she is finally induced to join in the search for Cupid. While searching, Diana and Venus find Belpheobe and Amoretta, two babes born at a birth, Belpheobe being born first, and then Amoretta, to show that first comes maidenly chastity, “perfect Maydenhed,” and then love and

¹ VI, vii, 30–31.

² III, vi, 21–22.

"goodly womanhed." Diana and Venus decide each to adopt one of the babes.

Dame Phoebe [Diana] to a Nymph her babe betooke,
To be upbrought in perfect Maydenhed,
And to her selfe her name Belpheobe red:
But Venus hers thence farre away convayed,
To be upbrought in goodly womanhed.¹

Venus takes Amoretta to be brought up in the Garden of Adonis, where, we are told,

All things, as they created were, doe grow,
And yet remember well *the mightie word,*
Which first was spoken by th' Almighty lord,
*That bad them to increase and multiply.*²

Perhaps Spenser's plainest condemnation of Celibacy and Insensibility, or Asceticism, is the episode dealing with Marinell in the Book on Chastity. Marinell is "a mighty man at arms." He eschews the love of women, for Proteus, the sea-god and prophet, has taught his mother to keep him from all womankind:

For thy she gave him warning every day,
The love of women not to entertaine;
A lesson too too hard for living clay,
From love in course of Nature to refraine:
Yet he his mothers lore did well retaine,
And ever from faire Ladies love did fly;
Yet many Ladies fair did oft complaine,
That they for love of him would algates dy:
Dy, who so list for him, he was loves enemy.³

One of the first great victories of Britomart (Chastity) is her defeat of this sturdy champion.

Though Britomart leaves Marinell for dead, his mother, Cymoent, by her magic finally revives him. We now learn that fair Florimell loves Marinell, but is scorned by him. In canto xi of Book IV Spenser gives a synopsis of the story of Marinell and Florimell, in order to continue it. The lovely Florimell, because she will not grant her love to the sea-god Proteus, is suffering horrible torments at Proteus' hands.

And all this was for love of Marinell,
Who her despysed (ah who would her despyse?)
And *wemens love did from his hart expell,*
*And all those joyes that weak mankind entyse.*⁴

¹ III, vi, 28.

² III, vi, 34.

³ III, iv, 25-26.

⁴ IV, xi, 5.

Clearly this is Celibacy and Insensibility, or Asceticism. Marinell is finally reformed by the love of Florimell.

One more episode might be given here. It is in the opening canto of the Book on Chastity. Britomart, who fights for Chastity, and the Red Cross Knight (Holiness), who "gave her good aid," come in their journey to "Castle Joyous," presided over by the witch Malecasta, called "the Lady of Delight." In the "sumptuous guize" of Castle Joyous the knights see

The image of superfluous riotize,
Exceeding much the state of meane degree.¹

Smith and Selincourt define the term "meane," in this passage, as "middling"; and indeed the context seems to make any other interpretation impossible.

Proof that the contemptible Mirabella of the Book on Courtesy is Discourtesy (if that can need special proof), and that Marinell of the Book on Chastity also illustrates Discourtesy—both being guilty of the serious offense of Cruelty, Unfriendliness, toward their lovers—may be had by comparing their conduct with the Courtesy of Britomart (Chastity) toward even the amorous "Lady of Delight," who, deceived by Britomart's armor, woos the Knight of Chastity in no modest manner. Britomart considers the feelings of other people and therefore does not rebuff the Lady of Delight until her conduct becomes outrageous:

For thy she would not in discourteise wise,
Scorne the faire offer of good will profest;
For great rebuke it is, love to despise,
Or rudely sdiegn a gentle harts request.²

Finally, a consideration of the characters in Book III shows plainly that Spenser treats Chastity as a mean, and that his extremes are the Aristotelian ones already mentioned. Marinell and Diana go to extremes in the direction of Discourtesy and Celibacy. Britomart, Belphoebe, Amoretta, and the true Florimell represent the mean. The extreme of Licentiousness is emphatically represented in the horrible Titan twins, Argante and Ollyphant, the hyena-like Brute, Proteus, Malecasta, the false Florimell, the infamous Hellenore, and Busyrane.

¹ III, i, 33.

² III, i, 55.

In addition to treating Chastity as a mean, Spenser not only discusses various phases of the virtue, after the manner of Aristotle, but draws from Aristotle the virtues and vices which he discusses in connection with Chastity. This fact throws light on an otherwise difficult passage in the *Faerie Queene*. In his continued discussion of Temperance,¹ already referred to, Aristotle has a curious discussion of brutality, or unnatural vice. "There is more excuse," he says, "for following natural impulses, as indeed there is for following all such desires as are common to all the world, and the more common they are, the more excusable they are also."² Again he says, "And if these are brutal states, there are others which are produced in some people by disease and madness. . . . Other such states again are the result of a morbid disposition or of habit." In this brutal or unnatural conduct he includes "unnatural vice," which he elsewhere refers to as "unnatural passion."³ Compare this with Book III, canto ii, of the *Faerie Queene*. Britomart, who represents Elizabeth as well as Chastity, is madly in love with Artegall (Justice). In the midst of this fine compliment to the Queen we have the following curious passage put in the mouth of Glauce, Britomart's old nurse, after Britomart has confessed her love:

Daughter (said she) what need ye be dismayd,
Or why make ye such Monster of your mind?
Of much more uncouth thing I was affrayd;
Of filthy lust, contrarie unto kind:
But this affection nothing straunge I find;
For who with *reason* can you aye reprove,
To love the semblant pleasing most your mind,
And yield your heart, whence ye cannot remove?
No guilt in you, but in the tyranny of love.

Not so th' Arabian Myrrhe did set her mind;
Nor so did Biblis spend her pining hart,
But lov'd their native flesh against all kind,
And to their purpose used wicked art:
Yet played Pasiphaë a more monstrous part,
That lov'd a bull, and learned a beast to bee;
Such *shamefull* lusts who loaths not, which depart
From course of *nature* and of *modestie*?
Sweet love such lewdness bands from his faire companie.⁴

¹ *N. Eth.*, VII, i and vi-vii.² *Ibid.*, VII, vii.³ *Ibid.*, VII, vi.⁴ III, ii, 40-41.

I cannot resist giving another example of Spenser's conformity to Aristotle's scheme. In cantos ix and x of Spenser's Book on Chastity we have the story of Hellenore and Malbecco. The latter, at first a real character, in canto x becomes Jealousy in one of the most powerful of all Spenser's personifications. It is the unlikeness of Malbecco and Hellenore which causes their great unhappiness. This unlikeness includes the fact that Malbecco has reached the age of impotence, while his wife is young. Their unhappiness results in the "rape" of Hellenore (Helen) by Paridell (Paris). That their unhappiness is brought about by their inequality and unlikeness is clear from reading the cantos. I quote a few passages, however, which establish this point by literal exposition:

But all his mind is set on mucky pelfe,
Yet is he linkt to a lovely lasse,

.
The which to him both far unequall yeares,
And also far unlike conditions has;
For she does joy to play emongst her peares,
And to be free from hard restraint and gealous feares.

But he is old, and withered like hay,
Unfit faire Ladies service to supply.
The privie guilt whereof makes him alway
Suspect her truth, and keepe continuall spy
Upon her with his other blinked eye;
Ne suffreth he resort of living wight
Approch to her, ne keepe her company,
But in close bowre her mewes from all mens sight,
Depriv'd of kindly joy and naturall delight.

Malbecco he, and Hellenore she hight,
Unfitly yokt together in one teeme.

.
Fast good will with gentle courtesyes,
And timely service to her pleasures meet
May her perhaps containe, that else would algates fleet.¹

Now there is a very close relation between the virtues of Chastity and Friendship, for Aristotle makes Friendship include love and the relation of husband and wife.² Again, Aristotle repeatedly makes

¹ III, ix, 4-7.

² That Aristotelian Friendship includes love is clear from the whole of Book VIII of *N. Eth.* The Friendship of husband and wife is discussed specifically in chap. xii.

the point that perfect Friendship requires perfect equality and likeness, and that any Friendship requires approximate equality and likeness. For example, he says: "In Friendship quantitative equality is first and proportionate second. This is clearly seen to be the case if there be a wide distinction between two persons in respect of virtue, vice, affluence, or anything else. For persons so widely different cease to be friends; they do not even affect to be friends."¹ Thus the lesson that the inequality and unlikeness of Malbecco and Hellenore is the cause of their destruction is straight Aristotelian doctrine. But this is not all. In the *Politics*, which is a continuation of the *Nicomachean Ethics*,² Aristotle discusses the subject of marriage. At the beginning of chapter xvi of Book VI he says:

In legislating about this association [marriage] he [the legislator] should have in view, not only the persons themselves who are to marry, but their time of life, so that they may arrive simultaneously at corresponding periods in respect of age, and there may not be a discrepancy between their powers, whether it is that the husband is still able to beget children and the wife is not, or *vice versa*, as this is a state of things which is a source of mutual bickerings and dissensions.

And Aristotle reiterates the idea throughout the chapter. That this point is the part of the lesson to which Spenser gives emphasis is clear, not only from the story and the literal exposition, but also from the name Malbecco.³ But even the idea of the impotent old husband's love of money and disregard of honor is Aristotelian. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, IV, iii, Aristotle says: "Illiberality is incurable; for it seems that old age or impotence of any kind makes men illiberal," and he repeats this thought in the *Rhetoric*.⁴

Again, Spenser makes it indisputably clear that reason is the determiner of the right course in respect of Chastity. Thus, as we have already seen, the old nurse Glauce, who in a measure represents Reason, or Prudence, assures Britomart (Chastity) that her conduct

¹ *N. Eth.*, VIII, ix.

² Not only the last chapter of the *N. Eth.* but the whole book prepares the way for the *Politics*. It is upon the relation between Morality and Reason, or Prudence, explained in the *N. Eth.*, that the legislator of the *Politics* bases his laws.

³ Ital. *becco*, a buck, a goat, a cuckold; cf. Marston, *Malcontent*, I, i, 118-20:

M. Duke, thou art a *becco*, a cornuto.

P. How?

M. Thou art a cuckold.

⁴ II, xiii.

is right, for it is in accordance with Reason.¹ On the other hand, we are told concerning the unholy passion of the witch's son:

So strong is passion that no *reason* hears.²

In discussing the virtue of Friendship, Spenser does not make much of the mean. But neither does his master. Aristotle only suggests that perhaps we ought to observe the mean in regard to the number of friendships which we undertake to maintain. Like Aristotle, however, Spenser does develop the virtue of Friendship by showing its opposites and by presenting various phases of the virtue and of its opposites. Thus he discusses Discord as well as Concord, Hate as well as Love,³ Falseness (Duessa) as well as "Friendship trew." He shows not only the friendship of the virtuous, as seen in such cases as that of Cambel and Triamond, but also the friendship of the vicious, friendship for gain, and so on, in such cases as the friendship of Blandamour and Paridell, which, in accordance with Aristotle's teaching, soon ends in strife.⁴ Professor Erskine⁵ asserts that Spenser's Book on Friendship "seems at first sight to treat only of jealousies and quarrels." He brings forward *two sentences* of Cicero from which he thinks Spenser must have learned that it was possible to present Friendship by showing its opposite. The fact is that in presenting Friendship by showing its opposite Spenser is not only doing what Aristotle did in every one of his virtues, but is doing what he himself did in every book of the *Faerie Queene*.

Moreover, Spenser discusses the same opposites and phases of Friendship that Aristotle discusses. For example, Aristotle deals with the friendship of the virtuous, which endures, and the friendship of the vicious, friendship for gain, and so on, which does not endure. We have already seen that Spenser represents these phases of Friendship. Again, Aristotle's Friendship is of three main kinds: the friendship of kinsmen, the friendship of love, including marriage, and friendship in the ordinary sense.⁶ In IV, ix, 1-3 of the *Faerie Queene*, Spenser gives a plain, literal exposition of these three kinds

¹ III, ii, 40.

² III, vii, 21.

³ IV, x, 34 and 32.

⁴ IV, ii, 13, 18.

⁵ *Pub. Mod. Lang. Assoc.*, XXIII, 846.

⁶ See, for example, *N. Eth.*, VIII, xii.

of Friendship, as Professor Erskine has observed;¹ and he reiterates this classification throughout the book.² Again, in connection with love Spenser illustrates the Aristotelian extremes of insensibility, or celibacy, unreasonable love, inconstancy, and licentiousness.³ Once more, in the Book on Friendship, as well as in the Book on Chastity, Spenser follows Aristotle in making equality and likeness essential to Friendship. Friendship is impossible between Cambell and any one of the three brothers, Priamond, Diamond, and Triamond.⁴ But when Triamond, by receiving the spirits of his two brothers, becomes the equal of Cambell, the two become perfect friends.⁵ Spenser does not stop, however, at showing friendship between these equals of high degree; he shows also friendship between two equal and like persons of low degree, the two squires in cantos viii and ix.⁶ Finally, the most striking thing about Aristotle's discussion of Friendship is his identification of this virtue with Concord in the State. He says: "Again, it seems that friendship or love is the bond which holds states together, and that legislators set more store by it than by justice; for concord is apparently akin to friendship, and it is concord that they especially seek to promote, and faction, as being hostility to the state, that they especially try to expel."⁷ Even this phase of Aristotelian Friendship is emphatically presented in the *Faerie Queene*. In the first canto of his Book on Friendship, Spenser presents Discord, the enemy of Friendship, whom the wicked witch Duessa has brought to hell "to trouble noble knights."

Her name was Ate, mother of *debate*,
 And all *dissention* which doth dayly grow
 Amongst fraile men, that many a *publike state*
 And many a *private* oft doth overthrow.

 Hard by the gates of hell her dwelling is,

 Yet many waies to enter may be found,

¹ *Pub. Mod. Lang. Assoc.*, XXIII, 849.

² Note, for example, the "friends," "brethren," and "lovers" of IV, i, 24.

³ See IV, ix, 21.

⁴ IV, ii-iii.

⁵ IV, iii, 26-37, especially 37.

⁶ See especially viii, 55-56, and ix, 10-11.

⁷ *N. Eth.*, VIII, i.

But none to issue forth when one is in:
For *discord* harder is to end then to begin.

And all within the riven walls were hung
With ragged monuments of times forepast,
All which the sad effects of *discord* sung.

Among these "monuments" are "broken scepters," "great cities ransackt," and "nations captived and huge armies slaine." "There was the signe of antique Babylon," of Thebes, of Rome, of Salem, and "sad Ilion." There were the names of Nimrod and "of Alexander, and his Princes five Which shar'd to them the spoiles that he had got alive." And there too were the "relics . . . of the dreadfull *discord*, which did drive The noble Argonauts to outrage fell."

For all this worlds faire workmanship she tride,
Unto his last confusion to bring,
And that great golden chaine quite to divide,
With which it blessed *Concord* hath together tide.

Thus Spenser follows Aristotle in making Friendship include Concord in the State. The same idea comes out in Spenser's presentation of Concord in canto x:

Concord she cleeped was in common reed,
Mother of blessed *Peace*, and Friendship trew.¹

In discussing his fifth virtue, Justice, Spenser expresses the mean in almost the exact words of Aristotle. Aristotle tells us that particular Justice has to do with the goods of fortune.² He defines Justice as follows: "Just conduct is a mean between committing and suffering injustice; for to commit injustice is to have too much, and to suffer it is to have too little."³ In the proem to Book V Spenser in describing the Golden Age, when all men were just, says:

And all men sought their owne, and none no more.

Again, in Book V proper, Spenser's treatment of Justice as a mean is unmistakable. In canto ii we have the Gyant with his "huge great paire of ballance." Complaining that this world's goods are unjustly, because unequally, distributed, the Gyant proposes to weigh everything and make a just distribution. He has asserted

¹ IV, x, 34.

² *N. Eth.*, V, ii.

³ *N. Eth.*, V, ix.

that he "could *justly* weigh the *wrong and right*," and Artegall (Justice) is testing him. Artegall finally tells him:

But set the truth and set the right aside,
For they with wrong or falshood will not fare;
And put *two wrongs* together to be tride,
Or else *two falses*, each of equall share;
And then together doe them both compare.
For truth is one, and right is ever one.
So did he, and then plaine it did appeare,
Whether of them the greater were attone.
But right sate in the midst of the beame alone.

But he the right from thence did thrust away,
For it was not the right, which he did seeke;
But rather strove extremities to way,
Th' one to diminish th' other for to eeke.
For of the meane he greatly did misleeke.¹

At this point Talus, Artegall's iron squire (the iron hand of Justice), hurls the Gyant into the sea and drowns him. This mean which the Gyant "misleekes," and which Justice demands, is not simply a mean but Aristotle's mean of Justice; for it is the mean in regard to the distribution of the goods of fortune. Moreover, the episode is Aristotelian in every particular. Aristotle teaches that equality as applied to Justice must be proportionate, not absolute. Justice, he holds, demands that the goods of fortune be distributed proportionately to the varying degrees of virtue in the citizens.² He even protests particularly against an equalization of property and reiterates this protest.³

Spenser's characters in this Book represent not only the mean but also the two Aristotelian extremes in regard to Justice: that of accepting less than rightfully belongs to one, and that of taking more. The first is represented by the Squire who is wronged by Sir Sanglier. Sanglier will not "rest contented with his right,"⁴ but, "the fairere love to gaine," takes the Squire's Ladie and slays

¹ V, ii, 45-49.

² *N. Eth.*, Book V. Aristotle makes the same point in his discussion of Friendship. See *N. Eth.*, VIII, ix.

³ See, for example, *Politics*, VIII, ix.

⁴ V, i, 17.

his own. The Squire complains to Artegall. Brought before Artegall for judgment, Sanglier defies his accuser, and testifies falsely that—

neither he did shed that Ladies bloud
Nor tooke away his love, but *his owne proper good*.

Then

Well did the Squire perceive himself too weake,
To aunswere his defiaunce in the field,
And rather chose his challenge off to breake,
Then to approve his right with speare and shield.
And rather guilty chose him selfe to yield.¹

Only by imitating Solomon is Artegall able to discover to whom the live Ladie belongs and who is the murderer. The other extreme is represented by Sanglier, the robber Pollente, his daughter Munera, the Gyant with the huge "ballance," and so on. Like Aristotle, Spenser puts the emphasis on the extreme of taking too much. The opposite of general Justice is represented by such characters as Grantorto (Great Wrong). The mean is seen in Artegall, Arthur, Britomart, and Mercilla (Equity).

The various phases of Justice discussed by Aristotle are clearly presented by Spenser, such as distributive justice, corrective justice, retaliation, equity, and so on. Spenser also plainly makes Reason the determiner of the mean in respect to Justice. See, for example, his literal exposition of Justice in V, ix, 1 ff.

Spenser's sixth virtue, Courtesy, is not only treated as a mean, but is exactly Aristotle's mean in regard to Friendliness. As we have already seen, Aristotle makes Friendliness consist in acting as a true friend would act.² He makes its extremes Surliness, Contentiousness, Unfriendliness, on the one hand, and Flattery and Obsequiousness, or Complaisance, on the other. His friendly man is pleasant to live with, for he is free from Surliness or Contentiousness; but he will not yield his approval or withhold his condemnation when wrong conduct is under consideration. This is why he is like a true friend. Here we have exactly the character of Spenser's Knight of Courtesy, as is shown, for example, by Spenser's literal exposition of Sir Calidore's Courtesy, in VI, i, 2-3. It is plain that the Blatant Beast,

¹ V, i, 23, 24.

² N. *Eth.*, IV, xii.

which Calidore, the Knight of Courtesy, is to bind, is one extreme in regard to Courtesy. Blandina¹ represents the opposite extreme. Calidore is, of course, the mean. Clearly Spenser puts the emphasis on Surliness, Contentiousness. We have already seen that Spenser develops the virtue of Courtesy by showing its opposites and by presenting various phases of the virtue and of its opposites. Further, that Reason is the determiner of the right course in regard to this virtue Spenser repeatedly makes clear. Enias, for example, appeals to Arthur, who here represents Courtesy, to rescue—

Yond Lady and her Squire with foule despight
Abusde, against all *reason* and all law.²

Thus I have shown, beyond question I hope, that Spenser follows Aristotle in essentials. Incidentally many correspondences in details have been pointed out, but lack of space makes it impossible to show how numerous such correspondences are.

At one point Spenser interprets his Aristotle with considerable freedom. He assigns Magnificence to Arthur, "which vertue," he says, "for that (according to Aristotle and the rest) it is the perfection of all the rest, and containeth in it them all," etc.³ Jusserand, conceiving that there is no warrant in Aristotle for any such statement, says, "He follows here, as a matter of fact, neither Aristotle nor the rest."⁴ Jusserand sees in Spenser's statement evidence that the poet's recollection of Aristotle was vague, and he finally intimates—what Professor Erskine, following him, states—that Spenser probably never had read Aristotle's *Ethics*.

Now suppose we could demonstrate that Spenser's memory did fail him at this point, that he actually was confused as to the Aristotelian meaning of Magnificence (*μεγαλοπρέπεια*). The fact would prove little. Greene,⁵ Herford,⁶ and others have proved that Spenser more than once forgot the thread of his own story in the *Faerie Queene*. If a slip in memory is evidence that Spenser knew little of, and had probably never read, Aristotle's *Ethics*, there is equal

¹ See especially VI, vi, 41–42.

² VI, viii, 6; see also VI, iii, 49.

³ Letter to Sir Walter Raleigh.

⁴ *Mod. Phil.*, III, 382.

⁵ *Pub. Mod. Lang. Assoc.*, IV, 173 ff.

⁶ See Professor Child's edition of Spenser's poems, note to I, i, 52.

evidence that he knew little of, and had probably never read, the *Faerie Queene*. But there is no evidence that Spenser's memory did fail him at this point; and there is much evidence that it did not.

Let us see what authority exists in Aristotle for Spenser's assignment of Magnificence to the morally perfect Arthur. First we must decide what is Aristotle. Jusserand says: "Three treatises on morals have come down to us under the name of Aristotle; one alone, the *Nicomachean Ethics*, being, as it seems, truly his; the others appear to be a make-up, drawn from his teachings by some disciples."¹ This is a kind of *ex post facto* judgment. Frederick D. E. Schleiermacher, the great critic and Aristotelian scholar, born one hundred and seventy years after Spenser's death, held that the *Magna Moralia* was the source of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and of the *Eudemean Ethics*.² Only recently have scholars begun to agree that the *Nicomachean Ethics* is probably the most truly Aristotelian of the three. An uncritical scholar like Spenser would certainly have made no such distinction. He would simply have accepted all three as the teachings of Aristotle, as they really are.

There is ample warrant in Aristotle for the idea that one of the moral virtues may be thought of as containing all the others. For example, it is clear from the *Nicomachean Ethics* that Magnanimity (I have elsewhere used the term Highmindedness) would fill this requirement;³ for although Magnanimity, or Highmindedness, is essentially love of great honor, it includes moral perfection in the fullest sense. Again, on the same authority Justice, in the broad sense, includes all the moral virtues so far as one's relations to others are concerned. But under Spenser's plan, set forth in the letter to Raleigh, the virtue assigned to Arthur could have no Book; and Spenser was too much interested in church matters and in politics not to write on Holiness and Justice. Besides, there would be a kind of impropriety in omitting the former; probably the Scripture text "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" had something to do, not only with Spenser's writing on Holiness, but also with his treating it

¹ *Mod. Phil.*, III, 374.

² *The Works of Aristotle, Translated into English under the Editorship of W. D. Ross: Magna Moralia, Ethica Eudemia, De Virtutibus et Vitiis* (Oxford, 1915), *Introd.*, p. v.

³ *N. Eth.*, IV, vii, and II, vii.

first. It was highly desirable then to reserve Highmindedness, or Magnanimity, and Justice for what we know as the First and Fifth Books. (If, as Jusserand holds, Spenser had already written the Book on Holiness when he completed the plan set forth in his letter to Raleigh, it was absolutely necessary to leave Highmindedness, Magnanimity, as the virtue of the Knight of Holiness; for it would do admirably for him, and no other virtue would do.) Thus if Spenser could assign some other virtue to Arthur, he could make the plan of his poem more elastic.

Now there was another virtue which was peculiarly adapted to Arthur, provided it could be made to include all the virtues—namely, Magnificence. According to the *Nicomachean Ethics*, “Magnificence is suitable to . . . persons of rank and reputation and the like, as all these advantages confer importance and dignity.”¹ Rank? Arthur’s was the highest. Reputation? Spenser tells us in the letter to Raleigh that it was because of Arthur’s reputation that he chose him as the hero of the *Faerie Queene*, he “being made famous by many men’s former works.” Again, the magnificent man labors for the public good and strives for honor. Once more, “The motive of the magnificent man in incurring expense will be nobleness; for nobleness is a characteristic of all the virtues.” “In a word, Magnificence is excellence of work on a great scale.”² What could better describe Arthur’s great works?

But can Magnificence be made to include all the virtues? Although in a strict sense it is simply a mean between meanness and vulgar display in the use of money, it seems to include much more. Moreover, there is, as we have already seen, abundant authority in the *Nicomachean Ethics* for taking the virtues not only in a strict but also in a broad or metaphorical sense. If Magnificence were similarly interpreted, it would be “the perfection of all the rest and contain in it them all.” But all this is from the *Nicomachean Ethics*. What do Aristotle’s other works on morals say about Magnificence? The *Magna Moralia* says: “But there are, as people think, more kinds of Magnificence than one; for instance, people say, ‘His walk was Magnificent,’ and there are of course other uses of the term

¹ IV, iv; II, vii.

² Cf. Aristotle’s discussion of the magnificent man, *N. Eth.*, IV, iv–v.

Magnificent in a metaphorical, not in a strict, sense.”¹ This is certainly suggestive. And according to the *Ethica Eudemia*, “The magnificent man is not concerned with any and every action or choice, but with expenditure—unless we use the term metaphorically.”² Here is a plain suggestion that Magnificence could be taken in a broad sense, could be made to include “any and every action or choice.” Such is Magnificence “according to Aristotle.” Who “the rest” are is not quite clear, but Spenser’s favorite poet, Chaucer, says in his *Persones Tale*, “Thanne comth Magnificence, that is to seyn, whan a man dooth and perfourneth grete werkes of goodnesse”³—exactly what Arthur “dooth.”

We come now to Jusserand’s third and last main argument. Jusserand contends that Spenser did not get his virtues from Aristotle and proceeds to argue that he did get them from his friend Lodowick Bryskett, and from Piccolomini’s *Istitutione morale*, through Bryskett. He thus finds it necessary to get over Spenser’s own assertion that he did take his virtues from Aristotle. He argues that “Spenser showed as a rule no minute accuracy in his indications of sources and models, and he did not display more than usual in this particular case.”⁴ The first part of the proposition is true. But to find that “as a rule” Spenser showed no “minute accuracy” is a vastly different thing from concluding that a solemn statement concerning the substance of his whole *Faerie Queene* is “misleading, every word of it.”

Let us examine Jusserand’s argument⁵ that Spenser derived his virtues from Bryskett, and from Piccolomini through Bryskett. Long after Spenser’s death Bryskett published *A Discourse of Civil Life*,⁶ a translation from Giraldi Cinthio’s three dialogues *Dell’ allevare et ammaestrare i figliuoli nella vita civile*. It is an account of the best way to rear children and includes a discussion of moral virtues in which the number twelve is mentioned. That Spenser knew this *Discourse* Jusserand concludes from the fact that Bryskett represents Spenser as one of the interlocutors in the conversation which furnishes the machinery of the book. Before the day of Spenser and Bryskett,

¹ I, xxvi.

² III, vi.

³ 736 (§ 61).

⁴ *Mod. Phil.*, III, 374.

⁵ *Ibid.*, III, 378–80.

⁶ London, 1606.

Piccolomini, taking Aristotle and Plato as his masters, had written his *Istitutione morale*, in which he discussed eleven moral virtues and added the statement that Prudence, which he classed as an intellectual virtue, might be considered a moral virtue. Jusserand holds that "twelve was a kind of sacred number and was sure to come in." In his *Discourse* Bryskett states that when he came to the question of the moral virtues he found that Cinthio had treated them "some-what too briefly and confusedly" and adds, "I have therefore, to help mine own understanding, had recourse to Piccolomini."¹ Jusserand takes this statement as "positive testimony" that Spenser knew the substance of the *Istitutione morale*. Jusserand concludes: "From such books and such *conversations*, from other less solemn *talks* which he and Bryskett, interested in the same problems, could not fail to have, Spenser derived his *list of virtues* and his *ideas regarding a list of twelve*."

Now it is quite possible that Spenser, the genius, should get his ideas from Lodowick Bryskett, a man of no great parts. It is also possible, however improbable, that Spenser read Bryskett's book twenty years before it was published. But there is no proof, or even evidence, that such was the case. And, by the same token, there is no evidence that Spenser knew Piccolomini's *Istitutione*. Professor Erskine has proved, what most careful students must already have suspected, that Bryskett's "conversation" which furnishes Jusserand's "positive testimony" is a myth. In putting his discussion into the form of a dialogue in which he himself, Spenser, the Bishop of Armagh, and others are the speakers, Bryskett is simply following a literary convention of the day. It is impossible to suppose all the characters of the dialogue actually together at Bryskett's cottage.² Besides, Erskine finds that the speeches which Bryskett puts into the mouths of Spenser and the good Bishop of Armagh are translated straight from Giraldi Cinthio. He finds further that even if the dialogue had been a real one it could have had little to do with Piccolomini, for it contains only one passage from him. It may be added that Bryskett could have taken the idea for the machinery of his *Discourse* from Spenser's *Mother Hubberds Tale*. In both cases

¹ *Mod. Phil.*, III, 378-80.

² *Pub. Mod. Lang. Assoc.*, XXIII, 831-50.

the author is sick, his friends come in to see him, and the conversation which is later given to the reader takes place. The only difference is that Bryskett is so anxious to take the credit of authorship that he commits the absurdity of having the sick man, Bryskett himself, do the talking, which consists in lecturing on philosophy for three days.

In the next place, even if Spenser had known Bryskett's *Discourse*, he could not have taken his virtues and the plan of his *Faerie Queene* from it. For one reason, Spenser's and Bryskett's virtues are unlike in nature. For example, Bryskett, like Plato, makes Prudence one of the moral virtues, whereas Spenser, as we have already seen, follows Aristotle in making it that intellectual virtue which determines the mean in the case of each of the moral virtues. Again, Bryskett makes Magnanimity a subordinate virtue, whereas Spenser, like Aristotle, makes it include all the moral virtues. Moreover, Spenser's basis of classification is quite different from Bryskett's. In Bryskett's classification, to quote his own words, "There are . . . four principall vertues . . . from which four are also derived (as branches from their trees) sundry others to make up the number twelve,"¹ whereas Spenser, like Aristotle, makes one of his virtues include all the others. Finally, even the agreement in point of number, which Jusserand would make much of, does not exist. Bryskett's number is twelve, Spenser's thirteen. And Spenser's plan of his poem, set forth in the letter to Raleigh, would have been impossible with any other number of virtues than thirteen. Thus it is plain that Spenser did not get his virtues from Bryskett.

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¹ Quoted by Jusserand, *Mod. Phil.*, III, 380.